"Everyone has the right to an education."

WELCOME!

This is the second issue of **"The Global Teacher"**, a joint Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and Oxfam Canada initiative. This issue highlights the fourth Global Campaign for Education, held April 6 to 13, 2003.

The Global Campaign for Education fights to guarantee that every child receives an education. They mobilise public pressure on governments and the international community to fulfil their promises to provide free, quality, compulsory public education for all people, in particular for child-labourers, women and disadvantaged sections of society.

Girl's Education is the theme of the April 2003 Global Action Week for Education, which was jointly organized by Education International (EI) and its partners in the Global Campaign for Education. The individual and collective action of EI members in 159 countries called attention of the public and political leaders to the urgency of achieving gender parity in education.

We hope this newsletter fosters an awareness of global issues in an informative and engaging manner, while supporting the goals of the Global Campaign for Education.

If you have any questions or would like further information on any of the issues and topics, please contact Barbara MacDonald at bmacd@ctf-fce.ca or Bill Hynd at billh@oxfam.ca.

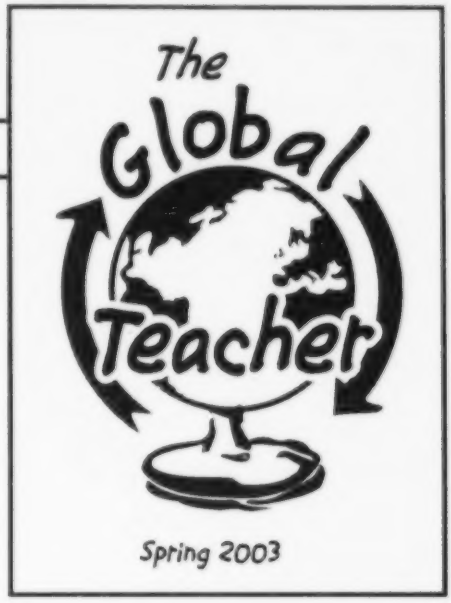
www.campaignforeducation.org
www.ei-ie.org

Did you take part in the world's biggest lesson ever?

On April 9th, 1,435,556 participants, in over 100 countries around the globe simultaneously learned about the importance of educating girls and women in languages ranging from Amharic to Danish and Bangla to Kishwahili. This successful attempt to make the Guinness Book of Records was organized by the Global Campaign for Education made up of over 400 groups from across the world, including Oxfam Canada and the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Most of the millions of children that are out of school in the world are girls. Yet study after study has shown that there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls. "No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve nutrition and promote health—including the prevention of HIV/AIDS. No other policy is as powerful in increasing the chances of education for the next generation", says U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Currently *110* million children are getting no school at all.
Two thirds of them are girls.



Policy Incoherence

—Basic Education as a Human Right and Trade in Education Services

CTF continues to work at both national and international levels to promote public education as a basic human right, rather than a commodity for international trade agreements. Lobbying with the federal government and with WTO is in affiliation with Education International.

The Canadian government has agreed not to seek or make commitments on public education services in GATS and FTAA negotiations, but remains ambivalent on encouraging other countries to do the same.

Developing countries are often victims of trade agreements that make it difficult if not impossible to meet the objectives of the Dakar World Forum on Basic Education. Commitments by G8 nations, including Canada, to help these countries respect the Dakar Declaration, are often in conflict with the objectives enshrined in trade agreements signed by the very same countries.

www.ctf-fce.ca

Global Action on Girls' Education

The year 2003 has many spotlights on the Education of Women and Girls.

On March 8th, Education International members focussed on the education of women and girls, and reflected on the goal of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and all levels of education no later than 2015.

Worldwide, women educators must take a lead.

While girls' enrolment is improving in 86 countries out of the 153 targeted, many still lag far behind and remain vulnerable to economic and social losses. Education for women and girls must be achieved to put an end to exploitation such as child labour and prostitution.

Education saves lives by giving women the confidence and power to make better choices for themselves and their children.

EI President, Mary Hatwood Futrell, adds that women and girls' education should not be seen only as an economic investment, but as a human right. "All over the world, women are being discriminated against and exploited simply because they are unable to read or write and are therefore unaware of their basic rights." Many of the health and productivity benefits of educating girls are not fully unlocked until secondary education is completed.

If you are educated, then you can educate your child.
You can get jobs. I will be able to teach my children.

A 15-year old girl trying to complete her education and overcoming her life-long poverty.

CTF fostered regional action among women teachers, and there are now vibrant networks in the Caribbean, South Asia, West Africa, South East Asia and the Pacific. Participants share a diversity of situations with common visions such as equitable access to education, participation in democratic processes, wages and protection against exploitation and violence on a gender basis.

Caribbean women teachers have braved the stormy Caribbean weather for decades. The waves have been high and choppy, the seas have been rough, but they have held on tightly as they face the challenges of globalization, information technology, crime, drugs, HIV/AIDS and poverty.

A comment from a member of the CTF network, Virginia Albert, Caribbean Women's Network

The common constraints to girls' education are endemic poverty, schooling costs, the burden of household labour, the shortage of school facilities especially in rural areas, the negative and even dangerous school environments, the cultural and social practices that discriminate against girls and the limited employment opportunities for women. And of course, HIV/AIDS strikes at gender equality as AIDS related mortality rises among female adults, and girls drop out of school to look after families.

I didn't go to school because I had so much work at home. Here at school, I am learning so much. I am learning to think well of myself. I want to become a teacher, so I can make others feel like me now.

Sangeeta, 16, India

Rich countries **can** meet 2005 and 2015 education goals with only $5.6 billion per year, less than three days of global military spending. **What are we waiting for?**

Educate our daughters. It is their right. Political will can be mobilised with your help.

OPENING THE DOORS TO A BETTER WORLD

This is the theme for World Teachers' Day 2003 on October 5th

This theme will ring meaningfully on the local, national and international scenes of teacher activities. Whether bringing a global perspective to Canadian classrooms, working together on common issues, or partnering for new education opportunities in developing countries, teachers are opening doors to tomorrow.

Stephen Lewis draws teachers into the HIV/AIDS fight

The tragedies and horrors of the AIDS pandemic in Africa weigh heavily on teachers. More than one million African children lost teachers to AIDS last year. Teachers are also community leaders, which leaves another hole. With low salaries and no health insurance, HIV-positive teachers feel doomed. Classrooms are full of bereaved children, as almost every family is affected.

And yet teachers are the great hope in winning the battle.

Stephen Lewis is the U.N. Special Envoy on AIDS in Africa, and his captivating speaking style and personal passion brought an audience of Ontario teachers to their feet and their wallets.

When he addressed Ottawa area elementary teachers in February, he endorsed the momentum for an Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) Humanity Fund as part of the next collective agreement with Ontario primary teachers. If the spontaneous collection of $2,749 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation to ease the pain of HIV/AIDS at the grassroots in Africa is any indication, there is great potential.

Support for HIV/AIDS education is a pre-requisite for accomplishing any sustainable development goals in Africa. A healthy future requires a healthy and hopeful citizenship.

CTF is currently assisting the local publication of pertinent HIV/AIDS education materials in Zambia and Namibia. Teachers' organizations are key collaborators with health workers in most countries, and are sharing much-needed practical information among themselves, with their students, and across their communities. Some organizations, like Catholic AIDS Action in Namibia, are ensuring the future by building resiliency in children.

Teachers and students in Canada can be part of building a global resiliency. Global awareness on HIV/AIDS and other challenges to a secure and healthy future opens the door to understanding and action. Funding is one response, caring connections are another and building resilience with mutual respect and understanding in our own learning environments is another.

"AIDS has a woman's face," said Mr. Lewis. "It's the most frightening part of the pandemic, and it makes me angry." He said that in the 15-to-49 age bracket, 29 million Africans have AIDS, and 57 per cent of them are women. Of Africans aged 15 to 24, nine million have AIDS, two-thirds of them women. "There has never been such an assault on gender historically. AIDS is depopulating the continent of women."

stephenlewisfoundation.org
www.unaids.org

Welcome to the Literacy Decade

The United Nations has declared 2003–2012 the Literacy Decade. Under the banner of "Literacy for all: voice for all, learning for all", the U.N. wants to extend literacy training to the most marginalized populations around the world.

Efforts to promote literacy may not be new but as Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO's Director General explains, "the persistent scandal of around 860 million people without access to literacy in today's world is both a chilling indictment and an urgent call for increased commitment." The goal is a world where each and everyone can fully participate in their own society.

According to the 2002 Global Monitoring Report on Education for All (EFA), 79 countries are at risk of not achieving the goal of a 50% increase in literacy rates by 2015. Women account for two out of three illiterate adults. The gender gap is most pronounced in the Arab States and North Africa, South and West Asia.

www.unesco.org

There's an education in that cup of coffee

Canadians love their coffee. We drink 15 billion cups a year. We spend $600 million each year for home consumption and another $2.2 billion annually at our local coffee shops. But how many Canadians are aware of the crisis affecting the 25 million who grow our coffee?

"The price of coffee is destroying this community. Now I can't even pay to keep my children in school. How can I send them to school when I cannot even feed them well."

Tatu Museyni, a coffee farmer from Tanzania.

Tatu's story is echoed for coffee farmers in 50 coffee-producing countries on four continents—Africa, Central and South America and Asia. The price paid to coffee farmers for their beans has dropped 50% over the past three years dramatically hurting communities and countries that rely on the sale of coffee for revenue to provide for such basic services as health and education.

70% of the world's coffee is grown on farms of less than 10 hectares. The vast majority is grown on family plots of between one and five hectares. After oil, coffee is the world's most valued commodity. Over 60% of Burundi and Ethiopia's export revenues are dependent on coffee sales. Today Ethiopia is facing not only a famine but a loss of much needed income from the dramatic drop in coffee prices.

The solution to the coffee crisis lies in reducing the current imbalance in supply and demand. Coffee-producing countries have agreed to reduce the supply by improving the quality of coffee traded. This plan will only work if the big roaster companies and rich countries support it.

The coffee crisis is but one example of an unjust trade regime that hurts Third World producers. For every $1 given in aid to developing countries $2 is lost in unfair trade. Trade can help eliminate poverty, but not when it benefits the few and powerful at the expense of small producers and poor countries. To find out more about the coffee crisis and how to make trade fair, visit www.maketradefair.com or www.transfair.ca

OXFAM Canada
www.oxfam.ca

Canadian Teachers' Federation
www.ctf-fce.ca

"You cannot have a world of peace unless you address the world of need"

In his first budget as the Minister of Finance, the Honourable John Manley used these words to support the 8 percent increase to Canada's International Assistance Envelope.

It is expected that Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2003/04 will climb to $3.2 billion and to $3.4 billion the following year. Mr. Manley also added approximately $373 million to the International Assistance Envelope for this current year ending March 2003.

"Half of these new monies," Mr. Manley told the House of Commons, "will be devoted to Africa to promote health and to fight HIV/AIDS, to provide clean water and to simply make a difference where it is needed most."

Both CTF and Oxfam Canada receive ODA funding through the Canadian International Development Agency. CIDA supports overseas programming as well as Global Classroom initiatives in Canada.

www.global-ed.org
www.acdi-cida.gc.ca